

Cartoons for the Classroom

Presented by NIEonline.com and the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists (AAEC)



Cartoon Courtesy Nate Beeler / DC Examiner

Between the lines

The chief executives of General Motors, Ford and Chrysler unsuccessfully pleaded for a financial bailout on Capitol Hill before Congress broke for the Thanksgiving Day holiday. Critics blasted both the management of the "Big Three" automakers and the leadership of their unions for their arrogance and sense of entitlement.

Get out your newspaper

Gather a collection of political cartoons from your newspaper. Using the Cartoon Evaluation Worksheet (available online at the NIE Website) analyze each cartoon and explain the issues addressed.

Sisyphusian auto bailouts

Talking points

1. In Greek mythology, Sisyphus was a king condemned by the gods to push a huge boulder up a hill, only to have it roll down again as it nears the top, and to repeat this throughout eternity. With that as background, write a sentence explaining the irony in Nate Beeler's cartoon.
2. Examine the other symbols that make up the message in the cartoon. The guy in the funny hat and striped pants is obviously Uncle Sam. Uncle Sam is a symbol for . . . what? The car labeled Detroit is not the City of Detroit, it's a symbol for . . . what? In fact it's no accident that the car being pushed up the hill looks like an SUV. Why?
3. The phrase "too big to fail" refers to the government's policy to bail out failing corporations (like investment banks) because the impact of failure on the public would be catastrophic. But if the corporations keep making the same mistakes, should the government keep helping?

More by Nate Beeler
<http://www.dcxaminer.com/opinion/blogs/NateBeelerToons/>

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<http://editorialcartoonists.com/>